

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) A process for producing exopolysaccharides comprising fermenting a ~~fermentation~~ of microorganism that produces exopolysaccharides ~~step, wherein the fermentation is carried out~~ in a nutrient medium containing at least one carbon source assimilable by the microorganism and at least one organic nitrogen source, wherein said source comprises deriving from a fraction of a carob bean having a protein content of at least 45% by weight with respect to the dry weight of dry matter.

18. (Cancel)

19. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 48 ~~17~~, wherein the protein content is of at least 60%.

20. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 48 ~~17~~, wherein the protein has a high content of arginine, of glutamine or glutamic acid, and of lysine.

21. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the fraction of the carob bean has a content of lipids of at least 4% by weight with respect to the dry matter.

22. (Original) The process according to claim 21, wherein the content of lipids is of between 7 and 15%.

23. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the fraction is a germ of the carob bean.

24. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the carob bean fraction is in the form of a flour.

25. (Original) The process according to claim 24, wherein the flour has a granulometry of between 10 and 150 microns.
26. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the nutrient medium further contains at least one inorganic nitrogen source.
27. (Original) The process according to claim 26, wherein the inorganic nitrogen source is an ammonium or sodium nitrate, an ammonium phosphate or sulfate, a magnesium sulfate, a potassium or sodium sulfate, or a mixture thereof.
28. (Original) The process of claim 17, wherein the organic and optionally inorganic nitrogen source in the fermentation medium is in a concentration of between 1 and 80 g/l.
29. (Original) The process according to claim 28, wherein the concentration of organic and optionally inorganic nitrogen source is of between 5 and 30 g/l.
30. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the assimilable carbon source is a glucose or a sucrose.
31. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the assimilable carbon source is a concentration of between 1 and 100 g/l.
32. (Original) The process according to claim 31, wherein the concentration of assimilable carbon source is of between 15 and 80 g/.
- 33 (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the fermentation of the microorganisms is carried out without an enzyme.
34. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein fermentation is carried out a temperature of between 15 and 100°C.
35. (Original) The process according to claim 34, wherein the temperature is of between 25 and 35°C.

36. (Original) The process according to claim 17, wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of bacterias of the genus *Xanthomonas*, bacterias of the genus *Alcaligenes*, bacterias of the genus *Agrobacterium*, bacterias of the genus *Arthrobacter*, bacterias of the genus *Azotobacter*, bacterias of the genus *Pseudomonas*, bacterias of the genus *Corynebacterium*, bacterias of fungi of the genus *Sclerotium*, bacterias of the genus *Aspergillus*, and yeasts of the genus *Hansenula*.